items, a tax-exempt category for a small number of items and a floor rate of 20% for items outside VAT. However, some variations in rates from State to State may exist due to the following decisions of the EC:

(i) The EC has permitted each State to exempt 10 items of 'goods of local importance' from VAT. This list varies from State to State.

(ii) The EC has permitted each State to notify its own list of industrial inputs (depending on the nature of usage of the item in the State concerned) which will be subject to the lower rate of 4%. Similarly, each State is to notify the list of capital goods, which are similarly subject to 4% tax rate.

Further, while the EC approved VAT rate structure has been broadly adopted by the States, it is also a fact that some States have deviated from this rate structure in respect of some of the items. The EC is closely monitoring the position in order to ensure that all the States comply with the EC approved tax rate structure. However, VAT being a State subject, it is entirely for the EC and the respective States to take appropriate action in this regard.

Training of Bank employees

3986. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any training facilities for the Public Sector Bank employees for increasing awareness of upcoming New Age Computing Banking Technology and most importantly Security of Information Assets, Cyber Laws etc.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) All the major public sector banks have got their own training establishments complete with all necessary infrastructure to cater to the training needs of their employees. Besides this, training establishments like College of Agricultural Banking, Pune, Bankers' Training College, Mumbai, National Institute of Bank Management, Pune etc. conduct round-the-year training programmes on contemporary topics, for the employees/officers of the banks, where

subjects like, core banking solutions, e-Banking/Internet Banking, Know Your Customer (KYC) and Anti Money Laundering (AML), Risk Management, system-related frauds, etc. now form an integral part of the training curricula.

Pending cases of compassionate appointment in Banks

3987. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are a large number of cases pending before the Nationalised Banks for appointment on compassionate basis as on date;

(b) if so, the details thereof Bank-wise and place-wise; and

(c) by when a final decision in regard to these cases is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) No, Sir. All Nationalised Banks have adopted a scheme of payment of ex-gratia (lump-sum amount) in lieu of appointment on compassionate grounds. Thus, as on date, the scheme of appointment on compassionate grounds is not in operation in any Nationalised Bank.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Loans to poor farmers

†3988. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a scheme to give loans to the poor farmers through Banks;

(b) whether farmers are unable to repay the loan amount as agriculture work is non-profitable; and

(c) if so, whether there is any scheme under consideration to provide financial assistance to farmers in place of loan?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.